

Chair Brandt Iden, Regulatory Reform Committee Members

I am speaking in opposition of the legislation and in support of the new process the bureau is using for the adoption of the 2017 Michigan Electrical Code.

I have participated on the Electrical Code Advisory Committee for the state adoption since the 1999 Electrical Code.

Previously the Electrical Code Advisory Committee consisted of members from the electrical industry. Two from the electric utility company, one from sign industry, one from the fire alarm industry, a person from the National Electrical Contractors Association, one from Associated Builders and Contractors and one from the International Association of Electrical Inspectors.

There are over 140 different subjects, in the National Electrical Code, known as Articles.

There is only one article in the code for Signs and one for Fire Alarm systems. The National Electrical Code is exempt when it comes to utility company wiring. These four individuals were mostly voting on code sections that did not understand or did not care because it didn't affect them.

There was also a representative from the Home Builders Association on the committee. This individual was only concerned with a few sections in the code and did not attend most of the code advisory committee meetings. The Home Builders Assoc. also have representation on the National Electrical Code as well.

The new process the Bureau is using this time, for the 2017 Michigan Electrical Code adoption is more lien.

1. It speeds up the process by removing all of the committee meetings which in most of the time did not address real concerns.
2. It will increase the participation from more of the industry in the whole. Previously, most electricians did not consider submitting a proposal to change the code since a committee was the group charged with that task and the fact that the State of Michigan is so far behind.
3. It removes the politics in dealing with a committee. I am sure there was some votes that were traded because most of the material in the code did not apply to them.
4. The previous electrical code advisory committees also reviewed the electrical provisions of the residential code. For the 2015 Residential Code, the previous bureau director along with some associations picked a residential code advisory committee which removed life saving and safety devices that are in the Michigan Electrical Code. After reviewing the Michigan's 2017 electrical statistics from Governor Snyder's Proclamation on May being electrical safety month.

4,343 electrical fires, 9 deaths, 91 injuries, 29 firefighter injuries and \$72.7 million in property damages. There is a need for Michigan to reinstate these safety devices. The first quarter of 2018 an additional 44 lives were lost due to fires in Michigan.

The Bureau sent out a request to the industry for the public to submit proposals to change the Code. They did that again in March. Last month they held a public meeting to address any concerns or complaint from the industry about the process. Everyone that attended spoke in favor of the new process. I think there was one individual from the Mechanical Board who I thought was going to speak against the process but after hearing all of the good comments choose not to speak.

Using this new system will expedite the process of adopting current codes in Michigan. This will increase the participation in the code development process in Michigan and with the National Electrical Code since Michigan would be on a current adoption cycle.

The National Electrical Code has been in existence since the first code was published in 1897 (121 years). The electrical industry is constantly changing and when a new edition is published there are numerous changes based on new technology and providing a safer built environment.

Renewable energy advancements and technology changes are reasons for five of the new articles in the 2017 NEC. Article 691 Large-Scale Solar installation is a new article for the 2017 NEC and for the past year there is one being installed in Delta Township. Article 691 deals with solar installation over 5 Mega Watts. The one in Delta Township is six times larger than that threshold. For each mega-watt of energy produced it can provide power for a thousand homes. The one in Delta can power over 30,000 homes. Presently in Michigan we are not afforded to privilege of the new provisions because we have not adopted the latest national standard that was published nearly 2 years ago.

Delaying the code adoption adversely affects the state attracting new businesses or applying new technology.

The legislation references the various code advisory committee's and the proposed make-up of the members. The residential code committee has 14 individuals. Wow. It appears that HB-5376 is designed to make it difficult to update codes and standards and to take advantage of new products and new technology.

The proposed legislation to add an additional level of bureaucracy to code adoption is not necessary, it delays timely adoption of the codes and adds additional costs.

I suggest that the Bureau's model being used for the adoption process for the 2017 Michigan Electrical Code be continued and to vote no on this legislation. Give this new process developed by the Bureau a chance. It is better.

David Williams

daw1422@gmail.com Cell: 517-719-3186